6r Mousset H-4 (no date) 1950 E16 Slavic Peoples E16

in August, 1947, a Yugoslav delegation opened negotiations for a commercial agreement. These negotiations were prolonged, but in September, 1949, the British Cabinet decided to open a credit of £9,000,000 for Yugoslavia.[2]

A parallel change of attitude was shown in the relations between Belgrade and Rome: after rather lively incidents in Julian Venetia, the two Governments drafted, in December, 1948, a reconciliation, which was to be recognised by the commercial agreement of August 4, 1949, in which press commentators saw a political significance. The question of Trieste, which had been settled by the agreement of April 27, 1947, between France, Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union, henceforth became of secondary importance, although Yugoslav claims to the Trieste zone (as to Slovene Carpathia) were never formally renounced.

On October 20, 1949, Yugoslavia was admitted to the Security Council by thirty-nine votes (out of fifty-eight voters) to nineteen for Czechoslovakia.

To sum up: Yugoslavia is seeking to reconcile her fidelity to Marxism with economic collaboration, on a footing of equality, with the Western States. Her attitude is defined in these two declarations made by Tito: 'While remaining solidly in the Socialist camp, Yugoslavia will regard as her enemy any one who interferes with her Socialist construction'. 'With the East we maintain economic relations, without any political set-off. When we sell copper to buy machinery, it is the copper we sell, not our conscience'.

* * *

As for Bulgaria, she has maintained with the Soviet Union ties which the Soviet-Yugoslav crisis only served to strengthen. The Government dealt the opposition a mortal blow by condemning to death the Agrarian leader, Nicolas Petkov, who was executed on September 23, 1947. This execution called forth a declaration of disapproval from the American State Department; on September 29 a speaker on behalf of the Foreign Office

[2] On July 2, 1949, General Ivan Gochniak, Vice-Minister for Defence, affirmed that, in 1944, Great Britain and the Soviet Union had agreed upon their respective spheres of influence in the Balkans: the Russians were to have a 75 per cent predominance in Hungary, Bulgaria, and Rumania; in Yugoslavia they were to be on an equal footing with the English, in whose sphere of influence Greece was left.

de Mousset H-4 (no date) 1950 E16 Slavic Peoples E16

described it as a 'crime against European civilisation', and on October 1 it was brought up at the Security Council by the French delegate, Parodi, during a discussion on Bulgaria's candidature for the United Nations. 648 696 829 175

In January, 1948, on the occasion of the signing of a treaty of mutual assistance with Rumania, the Bulgarian Premier, Dimitrov, risked an allusion to a project for the federation of the Balkan States, but this was immediately disavowed by the Kremlin. [185]

Dimitrov died on July 1, 1949; he was replaced as leader of the Government by Kolarov, and at the head of the Bulgarian Communist Party by his brother-in-law, Valko Tchervenkov.

The sentencing (March 8, 1949) of four Protestant pastors, accused of espionage, to life imprisonment, and the imprisonment of eleven others for a term of years, called forth vehement protests in the Christian world, and justified the sending of a diplomatic note by Great Britain, on March 12, in which these proceedings were described as a violation of Art. 2 of the peace treaty concerning 'fundamental liberties'.

The year 1949 was marked by progressive tension in the relations between Belgrade and Sofia. In September the Bulgarian Government denounced the treaty of friendship and, on October 6, the frontier agreement with Yugoslavia. This antagonism, which revived the Macedonian Question, reached a crisis at the trial of Traitcho Kostov, ex-Vice-President of the Council. Accused in March, by the Central Committee of the Communist Party, of 'flagrant errors' (the most serious accusation being that of having invoked the principle of State secrecy in order to withhold information of a commercial nature from representatives of the Soviet Union), Kostov found the charges gradually extended, until he was involved in a plot against the safety of the State, with the complicity of the Anglo-Americans and the agents of Tito. He was condemned to death, and executed on December 16. The Yugoslav press considered this charge as having been trumped up entirely with a view to compromising and discrediting Tito. 648 687 175 [208]

The municipal elections of May 15, 1949, gave the Communist-controlled Government of the 'Homeland Front' 92.1 per cent of the votes cast (370,000 blank votes); the legislative elections of December 18 raised this percentage to 666 175

6; Mousset H-4 (no date) 1950 E16 Slavic Peoples E16

origin), as Minister of Defence in the Warsaw Cabinet; he took as his deputy General Wladislaw Korczye, Chief of Staff of the Polish Army. This appointment was naturally interpreted as a further step in the subordination of Poland to the Soviet interests.

And the Polish-Sovietic *rapprochement* (at governmental level) had an unexpected result: the expulsion or the trial, on the ritual charge of spying, of French diplomats and nationals (Wroclaw case), thus creating a state of tension between two countries whose friendship had historic and spiritual roots of such strength that no political vicissitudes had hitherto been able to affect them.

* * *

Thus the events of 1948–1949 once more disturbed that 'Slav solidarity' which had been revived by the Second World War. It cannot be said that there exist, between the Soviet Union on the one side, and Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, on the other, ties which are stronger than, or of any different nature from, those which unite Moscow to Budapest or to Bucharest. The 'collaboration' operates exclusively on the basis of Stalin-Marxism and obedience to Moscow.

On the contrary, the Soviet Union's Enemy Number One is Tito's Yugoslavia. There is violent and complete rupture between the Southern Slavs for the one part, the Bulgarians, Eastern and Northern Slavs for the other.

The historic current which has, periodically, split up the world of the Slavs, has reasserted its mysterious disintegrating force.

Two small but typical facts may serve as a postscript to this study. On Stalin's seventieth birthday the only country which sent no 'homage' to the master of the Kremlin was Yugoslavia. And the President of the Panslav Congress in the United States, George Pirinsky, was imprisoned in Chicago as belonging to an organisation aiming at the overthrow of the American Government by force.